

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8179
USDOC WASHDC
USIA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMCONSUL CASABLANCA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJ: DAKAR INTERNATIONAL FAIR AND FUTURE SUCH EVENTS

REF: A. USDOC 695, B. 76 DAKAR 8153, C. 76 DAKAR 8218

1. SUMMARY: US PARTICIPATION IN 1976 DAKAR FAIR RESULTED FROM OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF AMERICAN INTERESTS IN SENEGAL REFLECTED IN PRESIDENT FORD'S ACCEPTANCE OF PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S INVITATION TO TAKE PART. SENEGAL IS DISPROPORTIONATELY INFLUENTIAL AFRICAN COUNTRY WHICH SHARES MANY COMMON INTERESTS WITH US AND HAS RECENTLY MADE WIDE-RANGING OVERTURES TOWARD US INCLUDING DECISION TO ABANDON PAST TARIFF PREFERENCES FOR COMMON MARKET (EC) PRODUCTS. FAIR'S HIGH SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE IS EVIDENT IN FACT THAT 55 COUNTRIES INCLUDING MOST MAJOR INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS PARTICIPATED. WHILE BROAD US INTERESTS SERVED BY PARTICIPATION IN FAIR TRANSCENDED STRICTLY COMMERCIAL PURPOSES, MOST US EXHIBITORS REPORTED THAT THEY HAD ACHIEVED THEIR OBJECTIVES.

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HOWEVER, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT STATE, COMMERCE, USIA, OMB, AND NSC NEED TO RETHINK SERIOUSLY USG'S APPROACH TO PARTICIPATION IN IMPORTANT EVENTS ABROAD WHERE SHORT-TERM TRADE PROMOTION ELEMENT MAY NOT BE PARAMOUNT INTEREST. MACHINERY SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE FOR US PRESENCE AT SUCH EVENTS WITHOUT FORCING EITHER USDOC OR LOCAL AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO BEAR DISPROPORTIONATE BURDEN.

END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY APPRECIATES SUPPORT PROVIDED BY DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR U.S. EXHIBIT AT 1974 AND 1976 DAKAR TRADE FAIRS, AND WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE ON RATIONALE FOR AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN SUCH EVENTS WHICH WAS OPENED BY REFTEL A.

3. AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN 1976 FAIR WAS NOT DETERMINED BY ANYONE'S EXAGGERATED EXPECTATIONS OF COMMERCIAL RESULTS, BUT BY OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF FAIR'S IMPORTANCE TO US POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL INTERESTS IN SENEGAL WHICH WAS AFFIRMED BY PRESIDENT FORD'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT SENGHOR DELIVERED DURING MAY 1976 VISIT BY SECRETARY KISSINGER. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE IT OR OTHER USG ELEMENTS MISLED POTENTIAL EXHIBITORS AS TO FAIR'S NATURE OR PROBABLY RESULTS.

4. THROUGH PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S PERSONAL PRESTIGE, A PIVOTAL GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION, PROFICIENT DIPLOMACY AND OTHER FACTORS, SENEGAL ENJOYS A POSITION OF INFLUENCE ON AFRICAN CONTINENT GREATER THAN WOULD NORMALLY BE JUSTIFIED BY MATERIAL RESOURCES OR PHYSICAL STRENGTH. PAST YEAR HAS BEEN NOTABLE FOR INCREASING CONGRUENCE OF SENEGALESE AND AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES ON ISSUES OF CENTRAL CONCERN IN AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD AFRICA AND MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS. THIS COMMUNALITY OF INTEREST HAS BEEN REINFORCED BY ACCELERATED PACE OF BILATERAL CONSULTATION REPRESENTED BY PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S 1975 US VISIT AND SUBSEQUENT TALKS IN DAKAR BY SECRETARY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KISSINGER, GOVERNOR SCRANTON AND OTHER SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIALS. SENEGALESE HAVE RECIPROCATED WITH OPENINGS TOWARD US WHICH ENCOMPASS POSSIBILITIES FOR INCREASED MUTUAL COOPERATION IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, INVESTMENT, COMMERCIAL, MILITARY, CULTURAL, JUDICIAL, NARCOTICS CONTROL, ACADEMIC, SPORTS AND OTHER FIELDS. ONE MAJOR COMMERCIAL-RELATED DEVELOPMENT WAS SENEGALESE DSDISION IN 1976 TO OPEN ITS MARKETS FOR FIRST TIME IN THIS CENTURY TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ENTRY BY US PRODUCTS THROUGH ABOLITION OF REVERSE PREFERENCES PREVIOUSLY ACCORDED FRANCE AND OTHER EEC MEMBERS.

5. PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN 1976 FAIR WAS EXTENDED IN MIDST OF THIS UNPRECEDENTED FLOWERING OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. IN SMALL, DEVELOPING COUNTRY SUCH AS SENEGAL, NATIONAL EVENT SUCH AS DAKAR FAIR ASSUMES UNUSUAL IMPORTANCE AS SYMBOL OF RANGE AND DEPTH OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS COUNTRY MAINTAINS (BESIDES PROVIDING REVENUE-PRODUCING OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE USE OF TOURIST INFRA-

STRUCTURE AND CONVENTION FACILITIES). AS PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S FEBRUARY 10, 1976 LETTER TO PRESIDENT FORD STATED, YOUR 1974 PARTICIPATION "IN THIS IMPORTANT OCCASION IN DAKAR WAS, FOR US, A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO MEASURE THE FRATERNAL AND FRIENDLY COOPERATION WHICH WE HAVE SHARED FOR MANY YEARS." DESPITE THE LIMITED COMMERCIAL ATTRACTION OF DAKAR FAIR, THERE WAS SUFFICIENT RECOGNITION OF OVERALL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS AT STAKE TO ENLIST PARTICIPATION IN 1976 BY 55 COUNTRIES, UP FROM 44 IN 1974 AND INCLUDING MOST MAJOR INDUSTRIAL TRADING NATIONS.

6. IN SUM, US COULD NOT OPT OUT OF THIS HIGHLY VISIBLE EVENT IF IT WISHED TO ENCOURAGE POSITIVE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TRENDS, AS WELL AS TO SAFEGUARD INTERESTS OF 27 AMERICAN FIRMS OPERATING SUCCESSFULLY IN THIS COUNTRY, TO PROTECT OUR POSITION AS NUMBER TWO SUPPLIER IN SENEGALESE MARKET AND TO MAINTAIN CONDITIONS OF EASY ACCESS FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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US FIRMS WHICH MAY WISH TO DO BUSINESS HERE IN FUTURE. LATTER GROUP NOTABLY INCLUDES THOSE WHICH MAY BECOME INVOLVED WITH SUCH AMBITIOUS DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AS PORT SEDAR REFINERY/ FERTILIZER PLANT/PORT/NEW TOWN COMPLEX, DAKAR MARINE TANKER REPAIR FACILITY, MIFERSON IRON ORE PROJECT, TITANIUM SANDS EXPLOITATION, DAKAR INDUSTRIAL FREE ZONE OR OTHER OPPORTUNITIES WHICH WILL BE DISCUSSED WITH AMERICAN FIRMS DURING PROJECTED MARCH VISIT TO US BY SENEGALESE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT LOUIS ALEXANDRENN. GOOD CASE CAN ALSO BE MADE THAT US SHOULD BE DOING WHAT IT CAN TO ENCOURAGE AND DISPLAY INTEREST IN THOSE AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH, LIKE SENEGAL, HAVE FOLLOWED MODERATE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES BASED ON LIBERAL INVESTMENT CODE, MIXED ECONOMY, INCREASINGLY FREE TRADE AND LIBERAL POLITICAL SYSTEM.

7. THIS CALCULATION OF INTERESTS WAS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY THOSE US COMPANIES WHICH AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN 1976 DAKAR FAIR WITHOUT SERIOUS EXPECTATION OF SUBSTANTIAL IMMEDIATE COMMERCIAL RETURNS. THE FACT IS THAT ALL AMERICAN EXHIBITORS EXCEPT ONE, WHETHER THEY TOOK PART FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS REASONS, TO MAKE CONTACTS, OR TO CONSUMMATE DIRECT SALES, REPORTED THAT THEIR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE WAS ACHIEVED (THOUGH ONLY PARTIALLY IN ONE CASE). FURTHER, AS REFTEL C INDICATED, MOST OF THE ELEVEN NTM AND OTM PARTICIPANTS WHO HAD DEFINITE COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE RESULTS ACHIEVED. DISTINCTION WHICH WE BELIEVE

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INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 PA-01 SIL-01 PRS-01 /041 W
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R 081555Z FEB 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8180
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AMRXNSUL CASABLANCA 0195
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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NEEDS TO BE DRAWN IS BETWEEN THOSE FIRMS AND THE SEVEN
OTHERS WHICH TOOK PART LARGELY IN DEFERENCE TO EMBASSY DESIRE
FOR EXHIBIT BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE OF RESIDENT US
BUSINESS COMMUNITY. THE STRENUOUS EFFORTS TO RECRUIT FIRMS IN
LATTER GROUP MOUNTED IN DAKAR AND WASHINGTON RESPONDED IN LARGE
PART TO WARNINGS THAT USDOC BUDGETARY SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE
IN RECRUITMENT OF NTM FIRMS WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED UNLESS
EMBASSY COULD DEMONSTRATE ENTHUSIASM ON PART OF ESTABLISHED
COMPANIES. LATTER HAD VARYING REASONS FOR RESERVATIONS OVER
PARTICIPATION UNDER USG AUSPICES, INCLUDING DESIRE TO
PARTICIPATE IN INDUSTRY EXHIBITS LOCATED IN SENEGALESE
PAVILION AND BELIEVE THAT TRADE FAIRS WERE GENERALLY IN-
APPROPRIATE VEHICLE FOR PROMOTING THEIR PARTICULAR PRODUCT/
SERVICE AND LACK OF COMMERCIAL OBJECTIVES.

8. IN FINAL ANALYSIS, EMBASSY BELIEVES U.S. DECISION TO TAKE
PART IN 1976 DAKAR FAIR WAS VALID, AND THAT, ASSUMING SIMILAR
CIRCUMSTANCES CONTINUE TO PREVAIL, PARTICIPATION MAY AGAIN
BE CALLED FOR IN 1978. HOWEVER, WE RECOMMEND INNOVATIVE
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REEXAMINATION INVOLVING STATE, COMMERCE, USIA, OMB, NSC AND
PERHAPS OTHERS OF HOW USG ORGANIZES ITS PARTICIPATION IN
SUCH EVENTS. MANY COUNTRIES AUGMENTED THEIR COMMERCIAL
PRESENTATIONS IN DAKAR BY HIGH QUALITY GRAPHIC/AUDIOVISUAL

PUBLIC INFORMATION EXHIBITS MOUNTED BY THEIR GOVERNMENTS WHICH PROVIDED PROMINENT FOCAL POINT AND UNIFYING THEME FOR NATIONAL PRESENCE. THESE WERE GENERALLY FLOATING EXHIBITS DESIGNED FOR INEXPENSIVE ERECTION, DISMANTLING AND SHIPPING, AND FOR MAXIMUM ADAPTABILITY TO LOCAL NEEDS. THOUGH USIS PROVIDED WELL-RECEIVED PHOTO EXHIBIT ON SHORT NOTICE TO OCCUPY ONE UNFILLED BOOTH AND OVERALL US PAVILION WAS PRAISED FOR ATTRACTIVENESS AND FUNCTIONAL EMPHASIS, WHAT WE HAVE IN MIND WOULD BE FIRST-CLASS GRAPHICS DISPLAY HIGH-LIGHTING BEST OF AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENT AND PROVIDING ARRESTING CENTERPIECE FOR EXHIBIT ENCOMPASSING THOSE COMPANIES WHO CLEARLY DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE. RATHER THAN OBLIGING ANY AGENCY TO STRAIN STATUTORY OR BUDGETARY PARAMETERS, WE BELIEVE USG HAS INGENUITY NECESSARY TO DEVISE EFFECTIVE INTER-AGENCY MEANS TO DREIVE MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE FROM INEVITABLE FUTURE FAIRS WHERE COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS MAY BE MODEST BUT OVERALL INTERESTS REQUIRE AN AMERICAN PRESENCE.

AGGREY

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